

**Top Secret**

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Wednesday June 9, 1976

CI NIDC 76-135C

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**NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION**  
Unauthorized Disclosure Subject to Criminal Sanctions

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State Dept. review completed

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Wednesday June 9, 1976

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[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

LEBANON

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[REDACTED] The Arab League foreign ministers, who gathered in Cairo late last night to consider the Lebanese crisis, adopted a resolution calling for an immediate cease-fire and the replacement of Syrian troops in Lebanon with an Arab security force. Late press reports from Beirut say Syrian President Asad has accepted the resolution.

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[REDACTED] The resolution appears to be a compromise between advocates of a Palestinian call for an immediate, unconditional withdrawal of Syrian forces and those hoping to avoid a direct challenge to Damascus. The resolution describes the joint Arab force as a "token" security force and gives no timetable for the replacement of Syrian troops.

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[REDACTED] The resolution also authorizes a committee composed of the Arab League Secretary General and representatives of Algeria, Libya, and Bahrain to go immediately to Beirut to "cooperate" with "all concerned parties" in arranging the cease-fire.

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[REDACTED] Although the resolution expresses support for the Palestinian revolution and determination to protect it from "all dangers," it carefully avoids direct criticism of Syria's actions in Lebanon and any suggestion that the Arab League is dictating to Damascus.

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[REDACTED] The speedy action by the foreign ministers clearly caught Damascus off guard. According to reporting early yesterday, Syrian Foreign Minister Khaddam was planning to arrive in Cairo today to counter Palestinian charges. Syria's representative at the session yesterday warned that Syria would not accept any resolution until Khaddam "had been heard."

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[REDACTED] We have no confirmation from Damascus that President Asad has, in fact, accepted all provisions of the resolution--as the Beirut press asserts. We would expect any Syrian endorsement to be qualified to reflect Syria's adamant opposition to

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[redacted]

the introduction of other Arab troops in Lebanon. Asad, however, may have accepted the League's call for a truce in principle in order to avoid total defiance of a joint Arab decision. The Syrians, moreover, have run into unexpected, stiff opposition in Lebanon and may even welcome a respite.

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[redacted] Late yesterday, Syrian armored units reportedly had finally broken through at Ayn Sawfar on the east-west highway to Beirut and were near Alayh, a leftist stronghold and the home of Kamal Jumblatt.

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Affect on Asad

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[redacted] The domestic returns on Asad's use of Syrian troops against the main Palestinian forces are not yet in, but tensions are running high in Damascus, and there are numerous rumors of serious unrest within the regime.

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[redacted] //The US embassy reports that none of these rumors has checked out thus far, and that there are no indications that Asad faces an imminent coup. Nevertheless, some of his senior military advisers reportedly continue to oppose his policy of armed intervention.//

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25X1 [ ] The urgency in Asad's present situation apparently was brought on by a serious miscalculation of the Palestinians' willingness to resist increased Syrian intervention.

25X1 [ ] One of Asad's goals is to gain greater control both over the PLO and the "rejectionist" fedayeen to ensure their cooperation in future Lebanese political negotiations and to ensure more responsiveness to Syrian direction on the broader Middle East peace questions.

25X1 [ ] Mistrust between Asad and Arafat has been deepening for weeks, and Asad progressively has shown a willingness to intimidate militarily the forces under Arafat.

25X1 [ ] His problem now is that he is coming under fire from nearly all sides in the Arab world for his assault on the Palestinians, and he cannot afford simultaneously to alienate radical and conservative Arab states.

25X1 [ ] Given the outside Arab pressures that are building on Asad, it seems unlikely that he will be willing to sustain military action against the Palestinians for much longer. On the other hand, he has staked too much on securing a satisfactory outcome in Lebanon to respond to the current Palestinian pressures for a substantial withdrawal of Syrian forces.

25X1 [ ] Asad will continue his efforts to rein in Arafat, to lure elements of the leftist Lebanese Arab Army to Syria's side, and to preserve Syrian primacy in eventual negotiations.

#### The Military View

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[ ]

25X1 [ ] The latest US embassy assessment notes that the heightened atmosphere of tension in Damascus is caused largely by popular awareness that Asad apparently has at last determined to

close down the Lebanese civil war and to involve Syria as deeply as may be necessary to do so.

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[REDACTED] //At the same time, the embassy sees Asad as continuing in firm control.// We doubt that he would have committed the bulk of Syria's 3rd Armored Division to Lebanon without the concurrence of most of his military commanders.

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[REDACTED] Much of the unease within the Syrian military over armed intervention in Lebanon previously has stemmed from fear of an Israeli military reaction, and the absence of an Israeli response may have substantially reduced the criticism levied at Asad from within the military [REDACTED]

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#### USSR-US

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[REDACTED] The USSR has been publicly re-emphasizing its interest in an early conclusion of a new strategic arms limitations agreement since the signing last month of the US-Soviet treaty on peaceful nuclear explosions.

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[REDACTED] Evidently cheered by the successful outcome of the prolonged negotiations on that treaty, Moscow has been playing up its symbolic significance for US-Soviet relations in general and for SALT in particular.

25X1

[REDACTED] At the signing ceremony on May 28, General Secretary Brezhnev, flanked by most of his fellow Politburo members, explicitly affirmed Moscow's intention to seek a new strategic arms pact.

25X1

[REDACTED] Other spokesmen have subsequently asserted that the treaty on peaceful nuclear explosions provides a stimulus to agreements on "other disarmament questions." *Pravda* last week carried an article exhorting Washington to move "as soon as possible" toward a new SALT agreement.

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[REDACTED] Such statements are in contrast to the reserved attitude Moscow had displayed earlier about the prospects for an early breakthrough on SALT.

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[ ] The Soviets' increased public attention to SALT apparently reflects hopeful readings of developments in the US rather than any substantial change in the Soviet negotiating position. The Soviets have been encouraged by President Ford's showing in recent presidential primaries in the face of attacks on the administration's policy toward the USSR.

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[ ] The Soviets were also pleased by President Ford's reaffirmation last month of his commitment to SALT, and reported his Los Angeles statement in their domestic press.

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[ ] Moscow probably still remains skeptical of the chances for a new SALT agreement this year. The *Pravda* article warned that "advocates of reasonable policy expect from the Republican administration not only words...but also concrete actions" toward translating the Vladivostok understandings into a final accord.

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[ ] Criticism of the US along familiar lines continues--specifically attacking the B-1, Trident, and long-range cruise-missile programs.

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[ ] A more optimistic public position serves several Soviet interests. It contributes to an image of the USSR as the champion of disarmament, and it helps to offset an impression of stagnation in the Soviets' "peace program." [ ]

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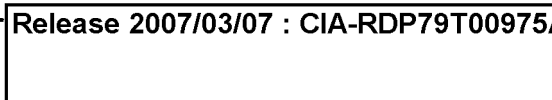
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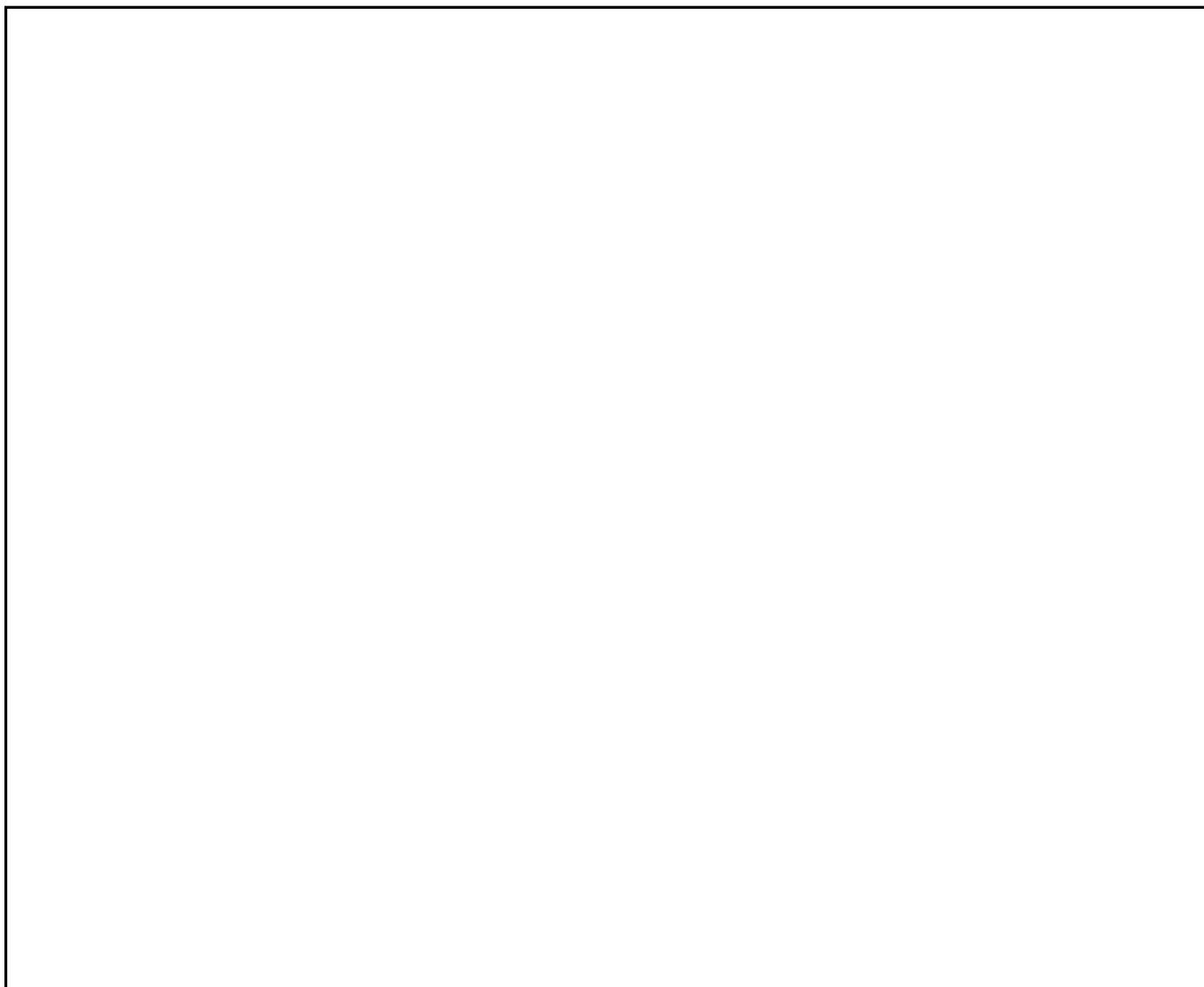
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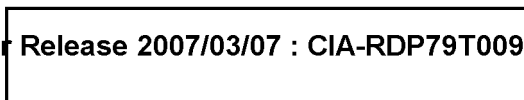
GREECE

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 The Greek government has made it clear publicly that it will continue to allow port visits by ships of the US Sixth Fleet despite recent demonstrations and parliamentary criticism directed against them.

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[ ] The issue was raised in parliament last Friday by deputies of the Moscow-backed Communist Party and Andreas Papan-dreou's radical Socialist Party who called for a referendum on the issue. They also accused the government of not implementing the agreement between Greece and the US that abolished the home-porting of US ships in Greek ports.

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[ ] Defense Minister Averoff emphasized that home-porting had ceased as of January 1, but announced that US ships would be permitted to visit Greek ports and that this policy would not be discarded because of the wishes of a minority.

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[ ] Averoff's performance is a reflection of Prime Minister Caramanlis' shift to partisan politics in the face of challenges to his leadership from the left.

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[ ] Greek security police clashed with demonstrators on both Rhodes and Mykonos; the government eventually asked that the ships leave to avoid more serious violence. In the meantime, a limited schedule of port visits has been resumed, including one, to a port near Athens last week, that was carried out without incident.

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#### CANADA

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[ ] Canada's recent decision to purchase 128 Leopard tanks from West Germany is an initial step toward meeting the commitment it made last fall to maintain and modernize its forces in Europe.

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[ ] Some details of the purchase remain to be worked out. Canada is trying, for example, to persuade West Germany to offset some 30 to 50 percent of the Leopards' cost--tentatively estimated at about \$160 million--by purchases of Canadian products.

25X1

[ ] Ottawa's decision to buy the Leopards reverses reported plans made in 1970 to phase out tanks on grounds they were of no use in Canada. The Liberal government, however, yielded to domestic pressures and to the urgings of NATO allies.

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25X1 [ ] Ottawa decided last month to cancel a \$1-billion long-range patrol aircraft contract with Lockheed unless a new financing arrangement could be worked out. //Lockheed hopes to present another proposal with new financing to the cabinet by the end of June.//

25X1 [ ] //The tank purchase supports Prime Minister Trudeau's statements following the cancellation of the aircraft contract that Canada would still live up to its NATO commitments. Defense officials are concerned, however, that the long-range patrol aircraft program will lose momentum if the Lockheed deal is not consummated.

25X1

## ANGOLA

25X1 [ ] The general staff of the Angolan armed forces yesterday ordered all its troops in Luanda confined to barracks until tomorrow. Staff headquarters cited a pending reorganization of the armed forces and preparations for armed forces day.

25X1 [ ] These reasons are not entirely convincing since armed forces day is almost two months away. It seems more likely that the order is tied to the factional dispute within the Popular Movement and may be part of a power play by the military against the political wing of the Movement.

25X1 [ ] Late last month, the general staff announced a plan for reorganizing the military. The key provision of the plan called for moving the armed forces political commissariat from the general staff to the Popular Movement central committee. President Neto rescinded the announcement the following day, claiming that it had been issued without his sanction and that certain parts of it contradicted provisions he had already approved.

25X1 [ ] Neto's real reason for rescinding the plan may have been to thwart an attempt by the military leadership to increase its influence in the central committee of the Popular Movement. The ruling party's military wing is made up largely of blacks who resent the predominant role in the government of the mulatto-dominated political wing. [ ]

25X1

MAURITANIA

25X1 [ ] A brief terrorist attack yesterday in Nouakchott, Mauritania, was apparently carried out by Polisario Front guerrillas opposed to the Moroccan-Mauritanian partition of Western Sahara. It was the first such incident in the city.

25X1 [ ] Polisario forces in recent weeks have increased their activity within Mauritania and probably will attempt further operations in the capital. Although Mauritanian officials are likely to increase security measures in and around the city, they will be hard put to forestall such attacks because of the city's vulnerability.

25X1 [ ] Nouakchott is on a flat plain extending into the desert. Buildings within the presidential compound, in particular, are easily targeted from outside; they are among the tallest in the city.

25X1 [ ] Mauritanian public reaction to the guerrilla attacks is likely to be expressed in a show of renewed support for the government's policy of partition of Western Sahara. President Ould Daddah has wide support in the government and with the general public. Any attempt by Polisario guerrillas to use terrorism to try to undermine the President is likely to backfire.

USSR

25X1 [ ] The editorial commission seeking to complete preparations for the proposed European communist party conference convenes today in East Berlin for a two-day meeting. The Soviet delegation is led by Politburo candidate-member Ponomarev. The second-ranking Soviet delegate, party secretary Katushev, visited both Romania and Yugoslavia during the past two weeks in an apparent effort to iron out differences that have prevented scheduling the conference.

25X1 [ ] The meeting today in East Berlin has been billed by participants as the "final" negotiating session, but that assertion may not hold true. In addition to Soviet efforts with the independent-minded parties, those parties have been engaged in

a last-minute flurry of consultations among themselves. The latest such talks, concluded only yesterday, were held in Rome between Italian Communist leader Berlinguer and Stane Dolanc, the number-two man in the Yugoslav party. [REDACTED]

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#### ARGENTINA

[REDACTED] Hard-line Argentine military officers are trying to force President Videla to take a tougher stand on subversion and a variety of other issues. This could confront Videla with serious human rights problems and divisions within the military.

[REDACTED] Videla and advisers who share his moderate and methodical approach toward national reform are trying to curb the arbitrary arrests by police and armed forces security services, compile a list of those detained, and halt vigilante-style activities against suspected and known leftists by semiofficial death squads.

25X1

[REDACTED]

25X1 [REDACTED] Hard-liners opposed to these and other government proposals--ranging from ambassadorial appointments to revising foreign investment laws--include a number of high-ranking army officers who have a sympathetic junta member in Admiral Emilio Massera.

25X1 [REDACTED] //Massera and his army colleagues do not appear bent on ousting Videla as President, but rather are determined to force moderates out of the President's circle of advisers.// Only then, they apparently reason, can the government impose discipline on the labor force, destroy the influence of corrupt and irresponsible politicians, and eliminate the well-entrenched leftists.

25X1 [REDACTED] The junta's image is already suffering from its inability to control right-wing terrorism. Moreover, labor and political leaders are increasingly concerned about Videla's inability to enforce the moderate line he promised on taking office.

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